

An
 Inaugural Dissertation

On
 Pneumonia Miora.

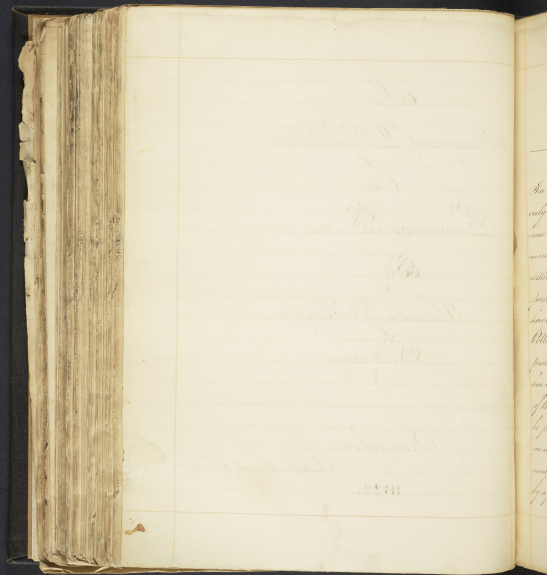
By
 Thomas J. Harper.
 Virginia.

"He that will, shall be instructed; and he that will not, shall be left in his own blindness."

November.

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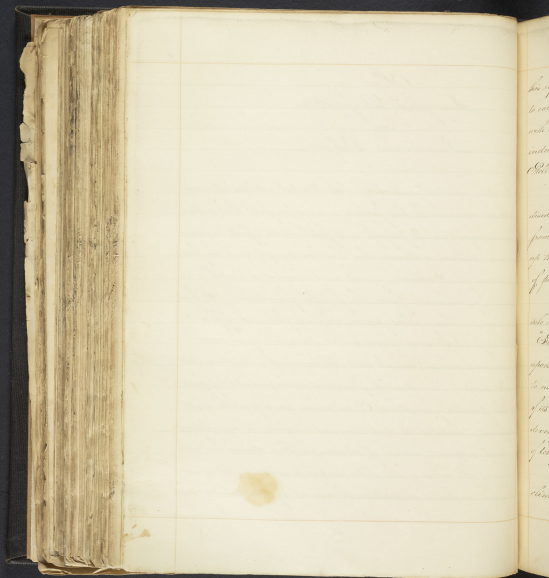
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An
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Pneumonia Biliosa

In the medical annals of the United States it is not only a remarkable, but perhaps a singular fact, that a disease so rapid in its progress and fatal in its effects as pneumonia biliosa, a disease that has been known since the first settlement of Virginia, should have claimed so small a portion of attention from the faculty of medicine. It has, however, within a short period, received from Professor Keller of Baltimore a well written description of its most prominent characteristics and therapeutick indications. Will it escape the attention of our own distinguished Professors of the practice of medicine? in whose therapeutics are to be found delineated its most prominent diagnostic symptoms, as well as correct method of treatment. This disease has not escaped the notice of the elder writers in medicine; but it is only by a few incidental observations thrown out by them, that we draw



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his inference, they, from a want of proper discrimination, were led to call all diseases *bilious*, in which the expectoration was tinged with a yellowish hue. I will here remark in advance, that I am indebted for a history of the disease to the work of *Rees's* *Medicine*, entitled "*ratio medendi*."

This is common with many other diseases originates from sudden vicissitudes of weather, as changes from cold to heat &c. A dense, cold, humid atmosphere, closing up the exhalents of the skin is by *Roux* said to be a cause of pneumonia, biliosa.

To those, which are the principle if not, the sole causes given by European writers, may be added many others. "It is the immediate offspring of a low temperature engendered upon miasmatic predisposition." No country long exposed to miasmatic effluvia is clear of its prevalence in some one of its various modifications. But the disease is more fully developed in those latitudes, most exposed to sudden changes of temperature.

Emigrants, from a northern to southern climate, are in an eminent degree liable to the bilious

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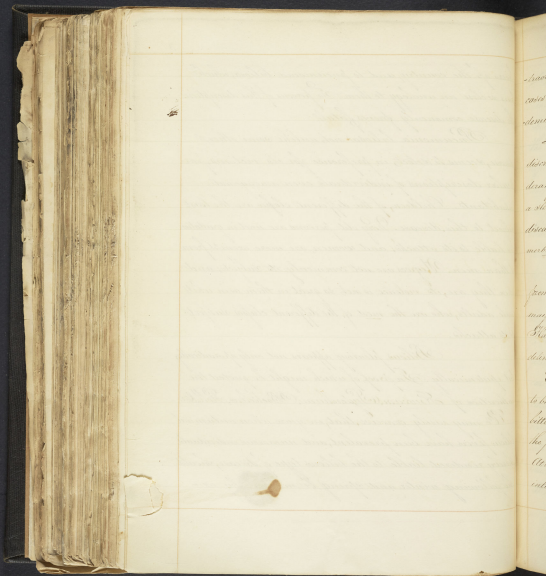
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fevers of the country and to pneumonia biliosa, which bears so close an analogy to them. In persons of this description the disease commonly proves fatal.

Pneumonia biliosa, not, unlike some other disease, seems to select, in preference for its victims, particular descriptions of individuals even among native inhabitants. Children, of the different classes are the least subject to this disease. Very old persons are next in gradation less liable to its attacks; and women are more exempt from it than men. Negroes are not commonly its subjects; and when they are, its violence is not so great in them as in white male adults, who are the most of the different classes subject to its attacks.

Bilious pleurisy appears not only sporadically but epidemically. In proof of which might be quoted the authorities of *Euromus*, *Episcopus*, *Wacholus*, &c. &c.

We may easily conceive, that, in years when autumnal bilious fevers have been prevalent, and numerous individuals thereby rendered liable to the bilious type of disease, should the following winter and spring be marked by ex-



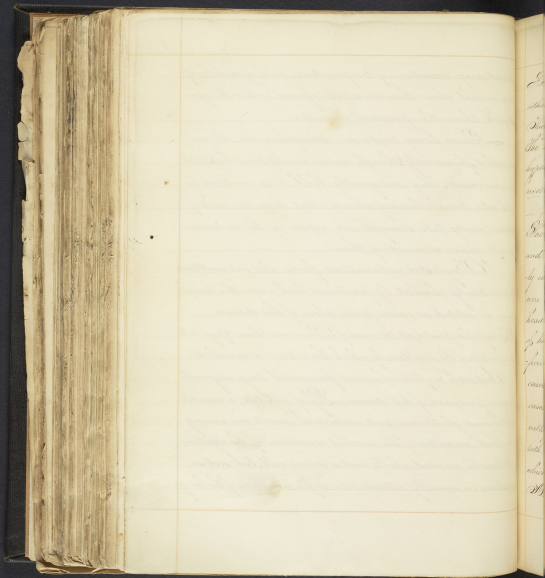
extraordinary variations of temperature, such a number of cases might show themselves, as to assume rather the epidemic, than the sporadic character.

Persons living under an atmosphere like the one described, frequently (though unconsciously) have hepatic derangements. They consequently hold their existence by a slender tenure, bearing always about them the seeds of disease, ready to be brought into action by the numerous morbid causes surrounding them.

Wegstedt intermittent fevers, also intermittents prematurely checked by peruvian bark and other tonics may be added as causes, to the above, of this disease.

Having thus pointed out the causes of Pneumonia I pass to the description of the symptoms by which the disease is marked.

Catarrh is often observed for several days, nay weeks to be a precursor of this disease. Sp of aphelitis, a mouth bitter and glutinous, and nocturnal sweats are among the first indicators of the morbid condition of the system. At length succeed chills and a severe cold, but not so intense as usually attends true inflammation of the lungs.



Pain soon follows, great oppression of the breast, acute pain either the stomach or one or other side of the thorax.

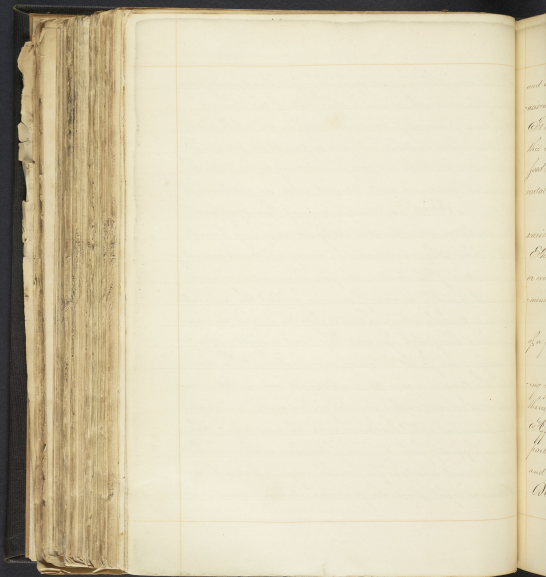
The pain frequently manifests itself in the whole chest.

The diaphragm on either side gives no pain to the patient. The hypochondria are tense and painful especially to the touch, the musculus cordis and parts situated below, are insensible to pressure. Bitter excretions accompany these symptoms.

The discharges are either obstinately costive, or very liquid and bilious. The countenance in many instances is strikingly indicative of the disease; the face being intermixed with a sickly mixture of greenish yellow.

The pain in the head is so severely torturing, that it gives the patient the idea of his head being clost & bander. The thirst is slight, and sufficiently great for the nature of an acute disease. In these cases the tongue is sometimes white, and mucous, but in most cases it is covered with a greenish yellow matter, or is rough with prominent villi, & coloured with the same colour. The teeth are frequently foul; A sense of distension in the stomach, to which is joined sensations of a painful weight or lead in the same.

Swallow is felt about the precordia. There is frequent vomiting,



and a dragging pain of the back. The spitte is usually tenacious, thick, and glutinous, but sometimes truly greenish.

It is not uncommon, that patients under the influence of this disease, are so severely affected as to loath and nauseate food, and to be unable to suffer it in their sight, from the extreme irritability of the stomach.

The pulse for the most part is soft, and of various degrees of quickness in different persons.

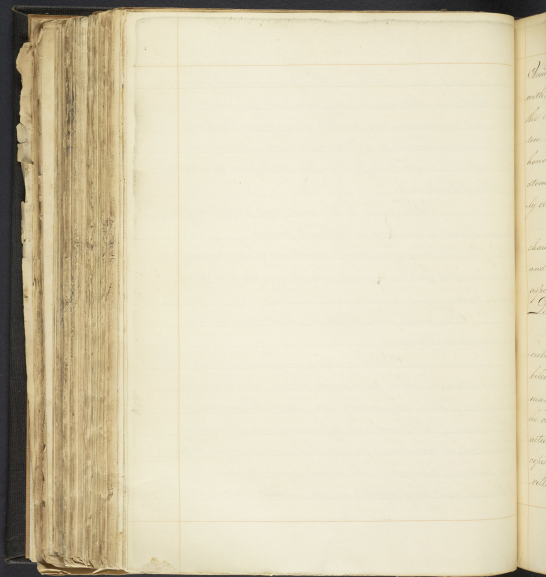
The fever is irregular, being sometimes of one tenour, or exacerbating at indefinite periods, without any fixed or determinate type.

The urine first yellow, in a short time becomes of a pimentose appearance.

Such are the general and more striking symptoms, by which jaundice biliosa may be known; though all of them, are rarely, if ever found in the same patient.

Affections of the breast and difficulty of respiration already particularized, are always present, and with them, the tongue and taste are depraved in the various degrees described.

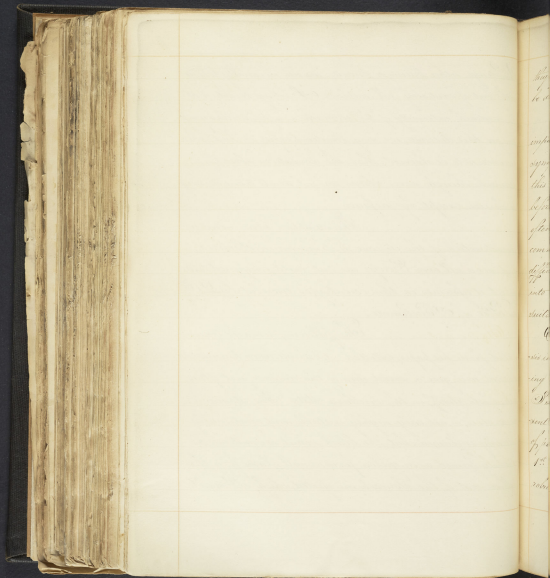
Nausea and loss of appetite are also constant attendants.



Vomitings, either bilious or otherwise, are not invariably to be met with; but of cardialgia, all complain. A biting sensation at the cardiac extremity of the stomach, is a particular symptom in this disease, we may sometimes expect to find. This, however, is to be observed, that the sensations above the stomach, though never absent, are not at all times strikingly obvious, except by inference.

The symptoms above noted as characteristic of the disease, as it occurred in Georgia, and even all over Europe, are but mild, compared to the aspect it assumes in this country, as described by Dr. Potter of Baltimore.

The following remarks transcribed from his paper entitled "Observations on pneumonia biliosa" will give a correct idea of the disease as it often manifests itself in the Southern States. "The stomach, in biliosa, is not only highly irritable and occasionally actually inflamed, but the black vomit is sometimes as copiously formed, as in yellow fever. small flakes from the yellow coat of the stomach are ejected, which although it

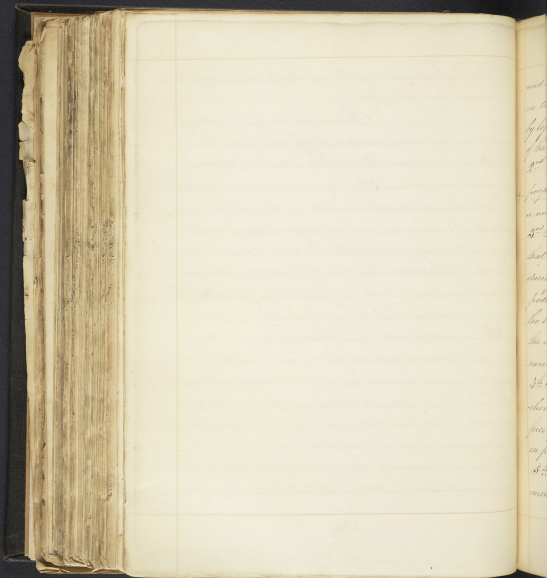


ling often pass unnoticed by the naked eye, can very frequently be discovered, by a good glass."

From a consciousness, that it is of importance to practitioners, to be in possession of all the symptoms of a disease, I have been induced to enumerate this numerous train. A disease in its commencement, before its character is well marked by clear indications, often buries under an ambiguous assemblage of symptoms common to many diseases. In this state, it is at all times difficult to determine the species of the disorder just arising into existence, and to crush it by the early applications of suitable remedies, while yet in the bud.

No one need be told the importance of a correct diagnosis in the treatment of disease, but a clear one, in the forming stages is, and has ever been a desideratum in medicine. I shall therefore attempt to give, according to the present state of our knowledge, the diagnostic symptoms of *pneumonia biliosa* and *pneumonia vera*.

1st Pure inflammatory pleurisy attacks for its victims, the robust and githeric - attacks without previous warning,



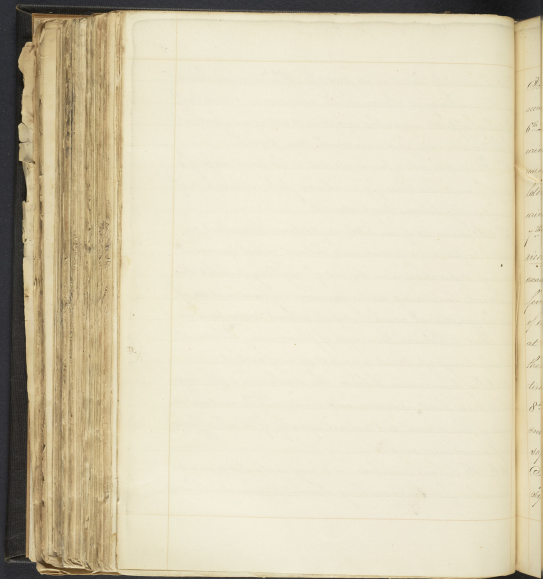
and is extremely rapid in its progress. *Pneumonia biliosa*, on the contrary is slower in its advances and indicated by loss of appetite and other symptoms denoting an affection of the *primæ viæ*, for a considerable time previous.

2nd Those who use a purgative diet, as the lower class of people and also those of a weak and feeble stomach, or of a naturally bilious temperament.

3rd Character of no little importance to recollect is, that the pain in *pneumonia biliosa*, is not increased during respiration or in the act of coughing; whilst the patients labouring under genuine inflammation of the lungs, cannot cough or respire without severe pain in the chest. Besides the cough of *pneumonia biliosa* rarely brings up blood unless it be very violent.

4th In *pneumonia biliosa* the scrobiculus cordis, hypochondria, head, abdomen, and loins chiefly sustain the force of the disease, but are not equally, if at all affected in *pneumonia vera*.

5th A bilious diarrhoea in many instances is an advertisement of the approaching disease (*pneumonia biliosa*)

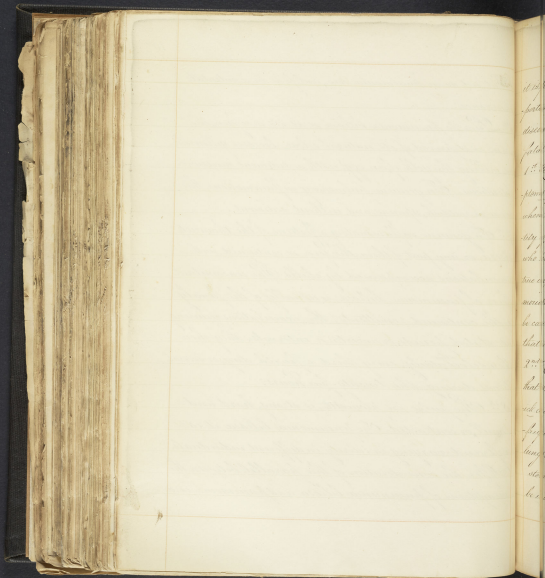


But not so in pneumonia vera, unless as an accidental occurrence.

6th Prior to pneumonia biliosa or at its accession, the serine is deprived of its natural colour, becomes yellowish, resembling the yolk of an egg, with a sediment mucous, or coarctations. In genuine pulmonary inflammation, the urine is reddish, sparing, and without sediment.

7th In genuine inflammatory affections of the thoracic viscera, or any part of them, the fever is continued, with exacerbations accompanied by chills. The concomitant fever of pneumonia biliosa, is usually of the family of the continued remittents; the exacerbations recurring at stated periods, or uncertain intervals. They show themselves ^{often} daily, every third or fourth day, or several times during the twenty-four hours.

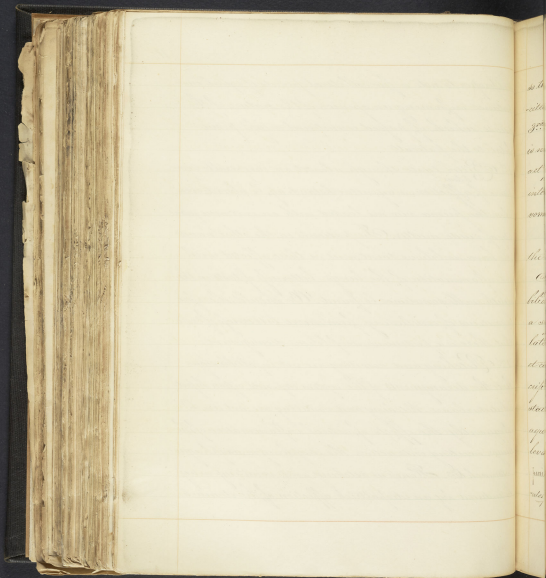
8th The pulse in pleuritis, is strong, hard and small, or contracted. In pneumonia biliosa it is soft and varying in celerity in different individuals. After the consideration of this parallel between the symptoms of pneumonia biliosa and pneumonia vera,



it is proper to note a few collateral points of equal importance informing an opinion of the nature of the disease, which, if passed unnoticed might prove fatal to the patient.

1st. Bitter taste though almost an insuperable symptom of ^{bilious} affection, may, notwithstanding, be absent, even when the prime viæ are loaded with an enormous quantity of crude matter. In patients on the other hand who have no bilious taint, and in those affected with true inflammation of the lungs, bitterness of taste in the mouth will sometimes be found. We should, therefore be cautious of concluding from mere bitterness of taste, that there is a predominance of bilious derangement.

2nd. Retching and vomiting are not infallible signs that the derangements of the system depends upon bilious disturbance. Retching and vomiting are not unfrequently the effects of actual inflammation of the lungs, exciting into action the diaphragm, œsophagus stomach &c. Hence or retching and vomiting may be induced by an idiopathic affection of the stomach;



so the vomiting apparatus may sympathetically be excited into action by an inflammation of the Lungs &c.

3.rd Other symptoms disagreeing; vomiting of bile itself is not a sign the disorder is bilious; for in almost every act of vomiting, bile is pressed into the stomach and intestines, from whence it is thrown up by the effort of vomiting.

4.th In persons, otherwise, in perfect health with the exception of some slight irritation, may take place.

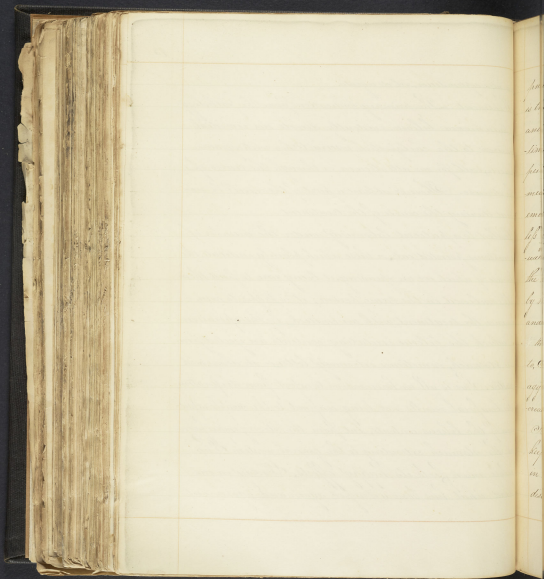
The difficulty of forming a prognosis in hœmemea biliosa, wholly unexceptionable, will it is hoped be a sufficient apology for the following quotation from the late *Roll of Thomas*. Non observavimus, stata prius, et certe dicam numero, hos agros judicari, nec peculiari cusp. chossii erant; id solum observatum, sputa, quæ initiatum apparere, fuisse primum glutinosa, tenacia, dein aquosa exasperaque ad finem morbi usque, quo sensim curam levamine immisculantur. Nunquam vidimus sputa illa puriformia, coetaque, qualis maturum catharium, aut inflammatis pulmonibus colere solent. Quotum intra octo dies sanabantur, quidam

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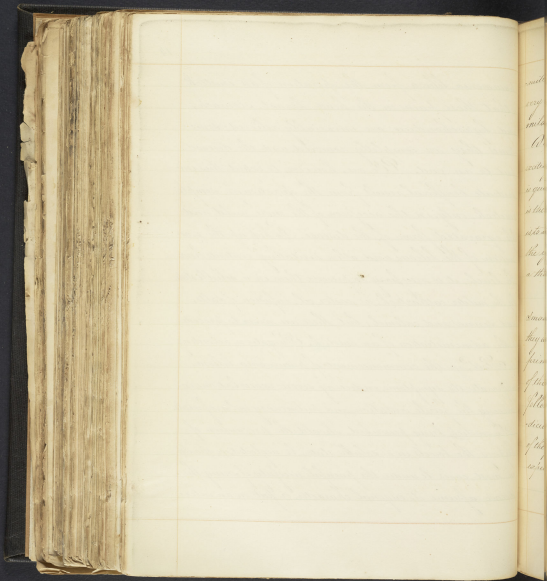
ere intra septuaginta, vel octoginta.

Treatment. The primary indication from the pathology of pneumonia biliosa, evidently directs our remedial resources to the catharsis visceralis. Other contingencies, however, call for our attention in, or through the course of, the disease. These, or at least a part of them, will be noticed during the course of the treatment.

Called to a patient labouring under the number of symptoms pointed out, or those which plainly indicate the disease of which we are speaking, it being rare to find them all combined in the same person; it is proper to commence the treatment with an emetic, by the operation of which the bilious irritating contents are ejected from the stomach, sometimes extremely bitter, or at others, acid astere. This is all we have reason to expect from its operation, its beneficial results not being confined to the simple expulsion of the bilious contents, but from the strong impression on the stomach extending to the general system. The whole man feels its happy effects. To say in one word what has been repeated again and again, is



pneumonia biliosa from the operation of an emetick, is that those pains in the head, breast, stomach, and hyriochondriae are invariably relieved; sometimes they are completely removed, and the disease put to an end. We are, however, to expect this immediate benificial result from the operation of a simple emetick, only, in the accession of the more mild and less aggravated form of the disease. To keep up the evacuation of the bilious and other irritating contents from the bowels, it is necessary to preserve them in a soluble state by the milder cathartick, as castor oil, infusion of senna, and senna and calomel; but these are never to precede the administration of an emetick. Purgatives, according to *Boerh.* in the commencement of pneumonia biliosa, aggravate its symptoms, inducing severe exacerbations, increasing the febrile irritation and pulmonary inflammation. An emetick being prescribed, should the precaution of keeping the bowels in a soluble state, be neglected, we should in most cases be under the painful necessity of seeing the disease assume its original character, or put on an inter-

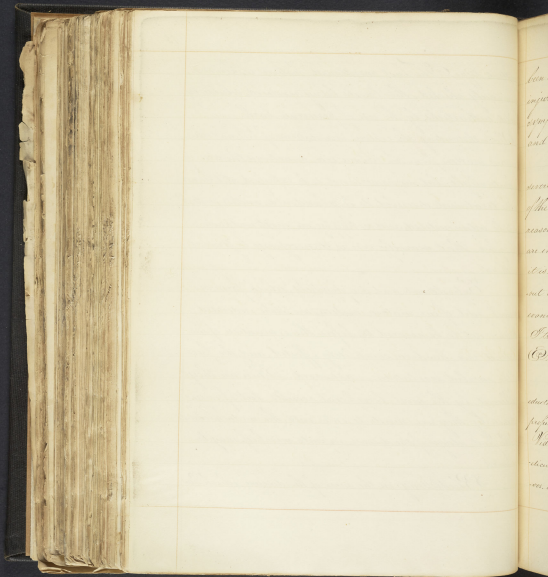


without type. The last mentioned feature, is, however, very easily checked, the bowels being rendered soluble by mild catharticks, by the use of peruvian bark.

Notwithstanding the copious evacuations of bile, and other, exciting matters from the *prima via*, sometimes the recovery is quite slight; but surprise is not to be expressed at this, nor is the treatment described to be abandoned; another method is to be administered, and so happy in most instances, is the issue, that scarcely ever is it necessary to prescribe a third.

Purgatives and diaphoreticks, which form no small part of our materia medica, are also indicated; they are not to be resorted to, before the evacuation of the *prima via* has been completely effected, and the force of the morbid irritation appeared. Then are they followed by the most beneficial results, but if judiciously they are made to enter into the medicine of the first stages of the disease, infinite mischief may be expected.

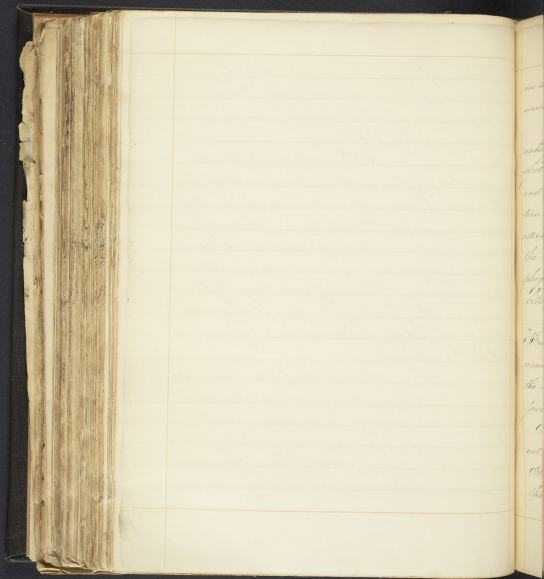
Bloodletting, in the view of the disease, which has



been taken, is, of all remedies, to be considered the most injurious; as producing the most frightful train of symptoms, under which the patient frequently sinks and is immediately lost.

Should the disease, from the severity of its accession or other causes resisting the force of the treatment described, continue in its march, it is reasonable to conclude that the lungs or their appendages are involved in considerable inflammation. *Verum?* it is not improper to recur to venesection, but not without circumspection, the case afforded being slight and evanescent. In further confirmation of this point, I trust the liberty of transcribing a passage from *(P. 21)* is allowable.

*— Si vena secta fuerat, omnia morab-
ducto sanguine in pectus auebant: solum emetic- catharticum
probat, id constans plerumque, ac insignis levamen attulit.
Videmus quorundam a nigrae sanguinis nec delirare, quibus em-
eticum parum, denique mentem restituit. Videmus affectus repere-
ros, incipientium episthethorum, resolutionem muscularum faciei ac*



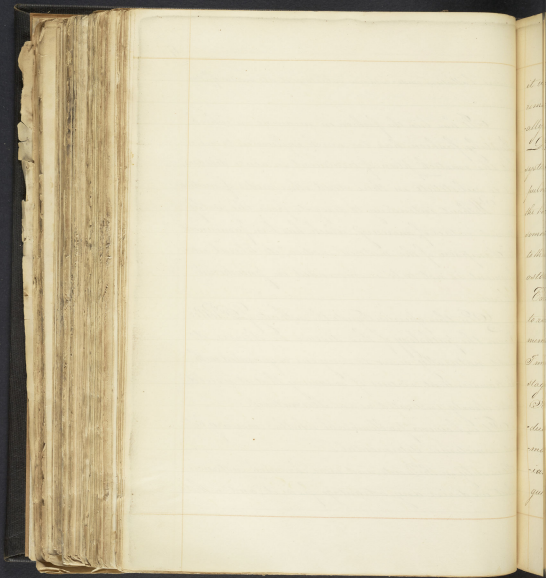
uno latere, Calustum endo-catharse sublatum, et ideo secretus effectus
mirabamur?

It has been the fashion in medicine in which, unhappily, fashion has too much influence, to neglect the emetick plan of treatment, in acute diseases, and to substitute in their stead other modes of medication. Without intending to derogate from the justly esteemed virtues of mercury, which has been pronounced the "Sovereign of the materia medica," its liberal employment is not to be recommended in *pericarditis* *interior*.

On this opinion quote the authority of Dr. Ferrius. "From the pathology of this disease he observes, it would naturally occur to everyone acquainted with the transcendent virtues of mercury, that it would prove clearly indicated as an alterative."

It is, however, problematical whether mercury be not sometimes detrimental.

It is only in the ^{acute} acute, and more chronic instances that we derive any advantage from it, and in these



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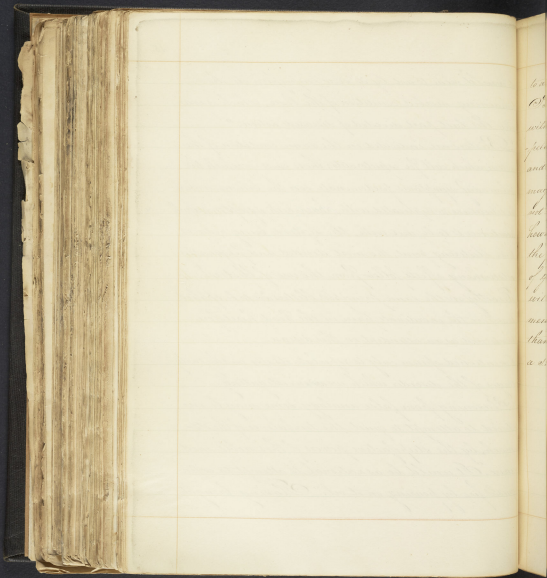
it would seem to act by its slow impression on the remaining morbid condition of the liver, which is essentially the last part divested of diseased action."

Blisters are indicated in the same condition of the system, which call for expectorants; those cases in which the pulmonary symptoms predominate over the bilious, or when the bilious are complicated with throat symptoms which sometimes is to be met with; the system being reduced to the blistering point, the most decided and frequently astonishing effects follow from the use of blisters.

Exactly on the same principles blisters are to be applied to relieve the inordinate pain in the head therefore mentioned as an attendant on this disease.

I mentioned opium only to reprobate its use in the early stages of the disorder which we are investigating.

Reasoning from false analogy some may be induced to attempt to quiet the turbulence of the stomach, by the stupifying powers of this noble medicine. It would be as rational to attempt to extinguish fire by pouring on it oil." Having brought



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to a close all I had to say on pneumonia lobæ; I submit to you Gentlemen, the observations made, without an apology, whom, in gratitude I am compelled to remember with the highest degree of respect and veneration, in what ever station of life, fortune may cast my lot. To apologise for various reasons not requisite to mention, is unnecessary. I trust, however, it may be allowable for me to say, that from the ^{scarcity} of the materials, and the inexperience of youth, any hints may have been dropped, which will lead to a further investigation of the disease mentioned, I will have done all, perhaps more, than I dare hope, since hope draws largely on a small capital not yet in its possession.

